



BIG BAD JOHN

McCain hopes to define legacy with national security post

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In this May 22, 2009, file photo Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz. waves as he is acknowledged by President Barack Obama at the United States Naval Academy graduation ceremony in Annapolis, Md. After two unsuccessful presidential bids, the 78-year-old former Navy pilot and Vietnam prisoner of war has rebounded as the chairman of the powerful Senate Armed Services Committee.

Associated Press

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Obama's address to pitch tax proposals to help middle class

JULIE PACE

AP White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama is turning to his biggest television audience of the year to pitch tax increases on the wealthiest Americans and put the new Republican Congress in the position of defending top income earners over the middle class.

As Obama continues to signal what he will propose during Tuesday's State of the Union policy address, senior administration officials said Saturday that he will call for raising the capital gains rate on top income earners and eliminating a tax break on inheritances. The revenue generated by those changes would fund new tax credits and other cost-saving measures for middle-class taxpayers, officials said.

Tax increases are rarely welcomed by congressional Republicans, who now hold majorities in the House and the Senate for the first time in Obama's presidency. Obama's tax proposals will likely be dismissed, if not outright ignored, by lawmakers outside the Democratic Party's liberal base.

"Are they going to agree on everything? Absolutely not. But I think we should have a debate in this country between middle-class economics and trickle-down economics," White House senior adviser Dan Pfeiffer said Sunday on NBC TV's "Meet the Press." He said the theme of the speech would be "middle-class economics."

Beyond rolling out new proposals, Obama's address is also expected to focus on making the case to the public that recent economic gains represent a real and lasting recovery. The approach reflects the White House's belief that it has been too cautious in promoting economic gains out of fear of looking tone deaf to the continued struggles of many Americans.

Obama isn't expected to make any major foreign policy announcements. He is likely to urge lawmakers to

stop the pursuit of new penalties against Iran while the U.S. and others are in the midst of nuclear negotiations with Tehran, defend his recent decision to normalize relations with Cuba, and argue for the effectiveness of U.S. efforts to stop Russia's provocations in Ukraine.

On domestic policy, Obama also is expected to call for lawmakers to make community college free for many students, increase paid leave for workers and enact broad cybersecurity rules. Administration officials disclosed details on the tax proposals on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the proposals by name ahead of the president.

The centerpiece of the president's tax proposal is an increase in the capital gains rate on couples making more than \$500,000 per year to 28 percent, the same level as under President Ronald Reagan. The top capital gains rate has already been raised from 15 percent to 23.8 percent during Obama's presidency. Obama also wants to close what the administration is calling the "Trust Fund Loophole," a change that would require estates to pay capital gains taxes on securities at the time they're inherited. Officials said the overwhelming impact of the change would be on the top 1 percent of income earners.

While Republican leaders have said they share Obama's desire to reform the nation's complicated tax code, the party has long been opposed to many of the proposals the president will outline Tuesday. For example, most Republicans want to lower or eliminate the capital gains tax and similarly want to end taxes on estates, not expand them.

Administration officials pointed to a third proposal from the president as one they hope Republicans would support: a fee on the roughly 100 U.S. financial firms with assets of more than \$50 billion. Officials said the fee is similar to a proposal from former Republican

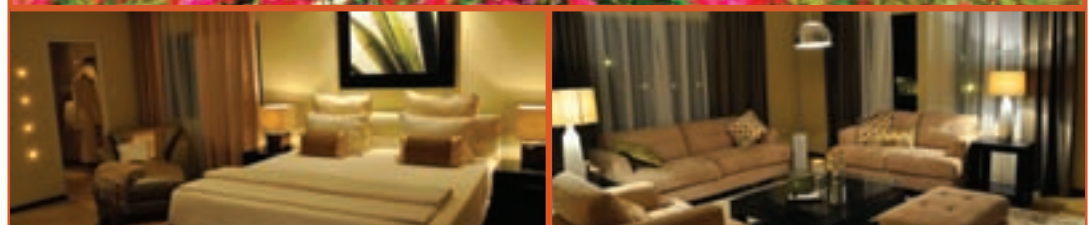


This Jan. 9, 2015, file photo shows President Barack Obama speaking at Pellissippi State Community College, in Knoxville, Tenn. Associated Press

Rep. Dave Camp of Michigan, who led the tax-writing Ways and Means Committee. Camp's plan, however, was part of a larger proposal to lower the overall corporate income tax rate. Raising the capital gains

rate, ending the inheritance loophole and tacking a fee on financial firms would generate \$320 billion in revenue over a decade, according to administration estimates. Obama wants to put the bulk of that money into a

series of measures aimed at helping middle-class Americans. These include a credit of up to \$500 for families in which both spouses work, expanding the tax credit for child care to up to \$3,000 per child under 5, and overhauling education tax breaks. Obama's call for higher taxes on the wealthy could further antagonize Republicans who are already angry with the president over his vows to veto several of the party's priorities, including legislation to approve construction of the Keystone XL oil pipeline from Canada to the U.S. Gulf Coast, make changes to the president's signature health care legislation and block his executive actions on immigration deferring deportation for millions of people living in the U.S. illegally. □

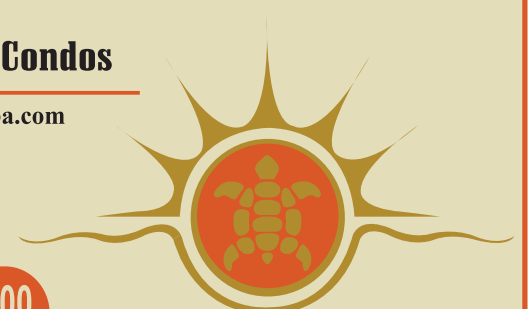


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In this Nov. 22, 2014 file photo, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden speaks at the annual Atlantic Council Energy and Economic Summit in Istanbul, Turkey.

Associated Press

Secret Service: Shots fired outside Bidens' Delaware home

KEN THOMAS
RANDALL CHASE
Associated Press
WILMINGTON, Delaware (AP) — Multiple gunshots were fired from a vehicle near the Delaware home of Vice President Joe Biden on Saturday night, the U.S. Secret Service said Sunday. The vice president and his

wife were not at home at the time of the shooting, authorities said.

The Wilmington home is several hundred yards (meters) from the main road where the shots rang out, and authorities were searching outside the Biden residence and nearby houses to determine if any rounds hit anything. Police in New Castle County, Delaware, said there were no reports of any injuries related to the shooting.

Secret Service spokesman Robert Hoback said the shots were fired at about 8:25 p.m. on a public road outside the secure perimeter near the home.

Secret Service personnel heard the shots, saw the vehicle drive past the home at a high rate of speed and flee the scene. The Secret Service said about 30 minutes later, an individual in a vehicle tried to pass a county police officer securing the outer perimeter of the area. That person was arrested for resisting arrest and was scheduled to be questioned regarding the shooting incident. County Police Sgt. Jacob Andrews said it appears the man was not involved in the shooting.

Biden's neighborhood includes stately stone-and-brick homes along a curving two-lane road that winds through rolling hills. Nestled in a heavily wooded area, the vice president's home is not visible from the main road. A small cottage, occupied by the Secret Service, sits on the property near a gate in front of the driveway that is

blocked off by Secret Service vehicles and personnel.

Police said there was a report of shots fired in the nearby area of Hoopes Reservoir, just northwest of the Biden home. The reservoir is a source of fresh water for Wilmington.

Biden's office said the vice president and his wife, Jill Biden, were briefed Saturday night, as was President Barack Obama. Biden's office referred all other questions to the Secret Service. On Sunday afternoon, half a dozen sport utility vehicles were parked near the entrance of the Bidens' property, providing a heavy security presence in the area. Shortly before 2 p.m., a motorcade of several more SUVs arrived at the house. It was unclear whether the vice president was in any of the vehicles. The vice president planned to speak Monday in Wilmington at the Organization of Minority Women's 31st Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. breakfast.

The Bidens spend many weekends at their Delaware home and while he served in the Senate, Biden frequently made a daily commute from Delaware to Washington by train.



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Freezing rain makes Northeast roads slick; 4 killed

NEW YORK (AP) — Rain “flash-freezing” on roads and sidewalks left an icy glaze under feet and tires across much of the northeastern U.S. on Sunday, causing crashes that claimed at least five lives. A crash involving 30 to 50 vehicles on an interstate highway outside Philadelphia killed one person, and two others died in a crash involving multiple vehicles on a nearby interstate highway, police said. In northeastern Pennsylvania, a man was killed after his car overturned on an icy road and he was thrown from it and hit by a commercial vehicle. In Connecticut, police cited slippery conditions in a crash that killed an 88-year-old woman who struck a utility

pole in New Haven. “This is the worst type of winter precipitation to combat, because it can freeze instantly and it doesn’t need to be the whole pavement for vehicles crossing it to have problems,” Pennsylvania Department of Transportation spokesman Eugene Blaum said. Freezing rain and snow was expected in interior parts of the northeastern New England states, but the temperature was expected to rise into the 40s and 50s Fahrenheit (above 5 degrees Celsius) along the coast and change the precipitation to plain rain in time for the evening AFC Championship Game between the New England Patriots and Indianapolis Colts.

On the West Coast, high winds left tens of thousands of customers without power in the Seattle area, but power companies promised Seahawks fans they’d do their best to restore power before the NFC title game against the Green Bay Packers. In eastern Oregon, highway officials partially reopened an interstate highway Sunday after a massive crash blamed on black ice Saturday closed more than 160 miles (257kilometers) of eastbound lanes. Rain was expected in western Oregon Sunday and Monday, but not as much as fell on Saturday, when 1.8 inches (4.57 centimeters) of rain in Portland sent some untreated sewage into the Willamette River.



In this Nov. 22, 2014 file photo, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden speaks at the annual Atlantic Council Energy and Economic Summit in Istanbul, Turkey.

Associated Press

Dozens of spinouts and accidents were reported from northern New Jersey to southern New Hampshire on Sunday and treacherous conditions forced the closure of the New York State Thruway from Newburgh to New York City during the morning.



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Another national campaign for McCain to define his legacy

LAURIE KELLMAN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sen. John McCain is waging another national campaign — this time, to define his legacy.

After two unsuccessful presidential bids, the 78-year-old former Navy pilot and Vietnam prisoner of war has rebounded as the chairman of the powerful Senate Armed Services Committee. The post gives the Arizona Republican a significant say on national security issues — and a chance to ensure that his loss to Barack Obama in the 2008 White House race isn't the final word in the colorful McCain chronicles. McCain wants to prod the Obama administration, which he derides as feckless, to adopt a tougher policy against worldwide threats. He wants budget and spending changes at the Pentagon.

A defense hawk in a party with a growing number of noninterventionists — he once dismissed a few as “wacko birds” — McCain wants to help educate new senators. McCain is calling foreign policy luminaries to share their world views with the committee, beginning this week with former national security advisers Zbigniew Brzezinski and Brent Scowcroft.

Ask McCain what he wants people to think of when they will recall his chairmanship.

Then ask how he wants to be remembered generally. The answers are nearly identical.

“To be able to play a signifi-



In this Sept. 3, 2008 file photo, then-Republican Presidential candidate, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and his running mate Sarah Palin waves to the crowd as she is joined by McCain at the end of her speech at the Republican National Convention in St. Paul, Minn.

cant role in defeating the forces of radical Islam that want to destroy America,” he says to the first.

To the second: “That I made a major contribution to the defense of the nation.” McCain clearly wants the chairmanship to help define his legacy, before voters in 2016 get the chance again to decide control of the Senate. The senator turns 80 that year, and all signs point to McCain running for a sixth Senate term. The leadership role gives McCain new power to push his agenda. He still has the energy that has helped him survive a hard-to-makeup biography: three plane crashes, an aircraft carrier fire, five torturous years in captivity in Vietnam, nearly three decades in the Sen-

ate, and two presidential campaigns in 2000 and 2008.

“You will see, probably, the busiest Senate Armed Services Committee that you’ve ever seen,” McCain said in a recent interview. Some members of the administration are eager to reset the sometimes-tense relations with the blunt-spoken, dry-humored senator. After all, knotty international issues, such as the prospect of using force against Islamic State militants, fall within the purview of McCain’s committee.

McCain and Vice President Joe Biden are genuine friends from serving two decades together in the Senate, though it’s clear that Biden hasn’t forgotten “some interesting things

he’s said about me, publicly” — such as McCain’s suggestion in 2012 that Obama drop Biden as his running mate.

“I know he loves me. And I care about him, I really do,” a chuckling Biden said of McCain in a recent telephone interview. “I think John’s legacy is that he never quits.”

McCain has a similar relationship with Secretary of State John Kerry, also a former Senate colleague.

Last April, during a hearing, McCain ripped into Kerry for “talking strongly and carrying a very small stick — in fact, a twig” on foreign policy. Kerry rejected what he said was McCain’s “premature judgment about the failure of everything.”

For all his partisan bluster

and fierce conviction, McCain has a record of deal-making so established that it inflames some on the political right, Kerry said. The pair, both decorated Vietnam veterans, played key roles when President Bill Clinton normalized relations with Vietnam in 1995. More recently, McCain’s been a member of bipartisan Senate groups that worked out deals on judges and immigration, though a bipartisan immigration reform measure passed by the Senate stalled in the House. “He’s a guy you want fighting with you if you can find a way” to compromise, Kerry said in a statement to The Associated Press. “This moment is a big one for him, and he has the capacity to really make a deep impact.”

McCain is a frequent target of the right, who complain about his work with Democrats, from the late Massachusetts Sen. Ted Kennedy to Democrat-turned-independent Sen. Joe Lieberman of Connecticut.

On the Pentagon, McCain is looking to a longtime role model, Arizona Sen. Barry Goldwater, who returned to the Senate after losing the 1964 presidential race and served as chairman of the Armed Services Committee.

McCain said the committee will tackle Pentagon restructuring. He also wants to end the automatic spending cuts that affected the military. Early next month, he expects the committee to confirm Ashton Carter as Obama’s new secretary of defense.

U.S. teens on alleged crime spree captured

PANAMA CITY BEACH, Florida (AP) — Two teenage sweethearts suspected in a crime spree of stolen vehicles and pilfered checks across the U.S. South have been taken into custody in Florida, Kentucky authorities said Sunday.

Grayson County Sheriff officials said in a statement that 18-year-old Dalton Hayes and his 13-year-old girlfriend, Cheyenne Phillips, were arrested without incident about 12:10 a.m. Sunday in Panama City Beach. The two had eluded police in multiple states while raising concern about their increasingly bold behavior.

Authorities said the U.S. Marshal's Service and local law enforcement in Panama City Beach discovered Hayes and Phillips asleep in a 2001 Toyota Tundra that was stolen in Georgia. The vehicle was surrounded by law enforcement and both Hayes and Phillips were taken into custody. Authorities plan to extradite the pair back to Kentucky where they are expected to face felony charges.

According to Bay County jail records, Hayes was held Sunday on a charge of custodial interference. He will make his first court appearance Monday.

Florida's Department of Children & Families was called to assist Panama City Beach Police, but Phillips was not in the state's custody, said DaMonica Rivas, a DCF spokeswoman.

"The juvenile has been taken to a safe location until arrangements with the family are made," Rivas said.

Hayes and Phillips began their run from the law and their families earlier this month when they vanished from their small hometown in western Kentucky. Authorities believe their travels took them to South Carolina and Georgia.

Hayes' mother, Tammy Martin, had urged her son and his companion to surrender and "face the consequences."

Martin said the couple had been dating for about three months. She said the girl portrayed herself as being 19, and the family, including Hayes, believed her.

Cheyenne "would go in and write checks, and she would come out with cigarettes and stuff, so I didn't have any reason not to believe she wasn't 19," Martin said. "Because normally you can't buy cigarettes when you're 13 years old."

By the time her son realized she was a mere 13, "he was already done in love with her," Martin said.

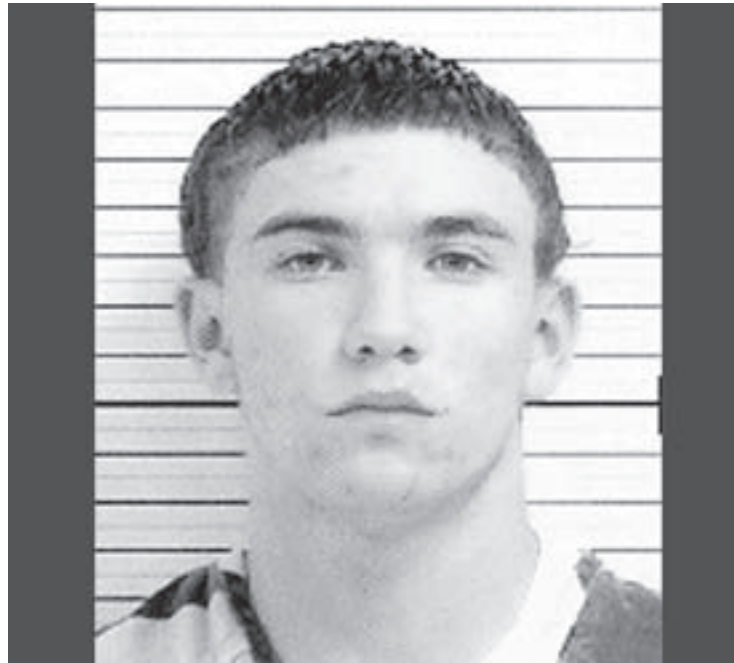
When he hit the road, Hayes was running away from trouble back home. He faces burglary and theft charges in his home county, stemming from an arrest late last year, according to Grayson County court records.

He was planning to be at the local judicial center on Jan. 5 to find out if a grand jury had indicted him on the charges, his mother said. His case did not come up, but by that time the teens were gone.

Norman Chaffins, sheriff in Grayson County, Kentucky, where the pair disappeared 14 days ago, said the couple's behavior had become "increasingly brazen and dangerous."

Twice, the teens were able to evade law officers in Kentucky, the sheriff said. They crashed the first truck they stole and hid in the woods. Then they later stole another truck nearby, Chaffins said.

At one point, the two were spotted at a Wal-Mart in South Carolina, where the teens are thought to have passed two stolen checks, said Manning, South Carolina, Police Chief Blair Shaffer.



This booking photo provided by the Bay County Sheriff's Office shows 18-year-old Dalton Hayes following his arrest, Sunday, Jan. 18, 2015, in Panama City Beach, Fla.

Associated Press.

Authorities believe they then headed to Georgia and stole a pickup truck from the driveway of a man's home, about 30 miles (50 kilometers) south-

east of Atlanta. The homeowner said he kept two handguns inside the vehicle that was stolen, Henry County police Lt. Joey Smith said. □

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No plea deal likely in Boston Marathon bombing case

ERIC TUCKER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The focus of the Boston Marathon bombing trial figures to be as much on what punishment Dzhokhar Tsarnaev could face as on his responsibility for the attack.

With testimony expected to start later this month, the Justice Department has given no indication it is open to any proposal from the defense to spare Tsarnaev's life, pushing instead toward a trial that could result in a death sentence for the 21-year-old defendant.

In a deadly terror case that killed three people, including a child, and jolted the city, there may be little incentive for prosecutors



This file photo provided Friday, April 19, 2013 by the Federal Bureau of Investigation shows Boston Marathon bombing suspect Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. Jury selection for Tsarnaev's trial is scheduled to begin on Monday, Jan. 5, 2015, in federal court in Boston.

Associated Press

who believe they have incontrovertible evidence to negotiate away their

ability to seek the maximum penalty possible.

"There would be now, in my judgment, no reason for the government to reverse course and not let 12 citizens decide if the death penalty is appropriate," said Larry Mackey, a former Justice Department prosecutor involved in the case of Oklahoma City federal building bomber Timothy McVeigh, who was executed in 2001. The prospect of a death sentence, a rare punishment in the federal system, raises the stakes of a trial that will revisit in gory detail the 2013 attack that also injured more than 260 people. Should the jury find Tsarnaev guilty, it would then decide in a separate penalty phase whether he should be sentenced to death. Jury selection is underway and the judge has said he hopes to begin testimony on Jan. 26.

Only three federal inmates, including McVeigh, have been put to death since

2001. Recent bungled executions at the state level have placed the practice under scrutiny, with President Barack Obama directing the Justice Department last year to investigate how the death penalty is applied across the U.S.

Despite his own personal reservations about the death penalty, Attorney General Eric Holder says the government is committed to seeking that punishment for Tsarnaev. Prosecutors have cited factors including a "lack of remorse," the evident premeditation involved in the attack and allegations that Tsarnaev also killed a Massachusetts Institute of Technology police officer after the bombing at the marathon finish line that left an 8-year-old boy dead.

"The nature of the conduct at issue and the resultant harm compel this decision," Holder said in a statement last January. There has been no indication the government has wavered in that decision, even though one of Tsarnaev's lawyers, Judy Clarke, has gotten prosecutors to spare the lives of three high-profile killers: Unabomber Ted Kaczynski, Olympic Park bomber Eric Rudolph and Jared Loughner, who killed six people and wounded former U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords.

But there's also no predicting how a trial will play out, including whether a conviction would result in a death sentence — particularly in liberal Massachusetts, which abolished its state death penalty in

1984. In a bid to save his life, defense lawyers may hope to cast Tsarnaev as an impressionable young man pressured into participating in the attack by his older brother, Tamerlan, who died after a firefight with police days after the bombing.

Gerald Zerkin, a Virginia defense lawyer who represented Sept. 11 conspirator Zacarias Moussaoui, who is now serving a life sentence, said there are obvious benefits for the government to accept a plea in death penalty cases, including to reduce the uncertainty of a trial and to spare victims and their loved ones from reliving the horrific facts of a case. "You can get a resolution that is life without parole, and you could do it for a lot less money, a lot less time, a lot fewer resources" and without "re-traumatizing victims," Zerkin said.

Rob Owen, a professor who runs a death penalty case clinic at Northwestern University, said a death sentence will result in years of legal appeals whereas a guilty plea would presumably help the case fade faster from public attention.

But with the trial's opening arguments less than two weeks away, any window for a deal to spare Tsarnaev's life has likely closed and there's little reason for the government to entertain the possibility, Mackey said.

"The calculus was done, I'm sure in this case, the day after the bombing, when people were faced full-front with the ugly scenario left on the streets of Boston," he said.

Fitness model struck and killed by train in California

BURBANK, California (AP)

— A 37-year-old model and actor featured on the cover of numerous fitness magazines was struck and killed by a train while filming on the tracks in Southern California, authorities said. Two men were filming George Plitt Jr. on the railroad track north of the Burbank train station Saturday afternoon when Plitt was hit by a southbound train, said Burbank Police Sgt. Scott Meadows.

Investigators, who interviewed witnesses who saw Plitt standing on the track even as the train's horn was blaring, have ruled out a suicide, he said.

It appears Plitt may have believed the train was on a nearby, parallel track, Meadows said. "It's like a

blind turn," he said. "When the train came, you might not be able to tell which set the train is on."

It was not immediately clear what the men were filming. Investigators are trying to determine who directed the men to film on the railroad track.

Plitt also went by the name Greg and was a well-known fitness model, he said. The actor and West Point graduate has appeared on more than 200 magazine covers, Bravo's reality television show "Work Out" and NBC's daytime soap opera "Days of Our Lives," according to a website in Plitt's name. Plitt was born in Baltimore. He served five years in the Army after graduating from West Point, the website said.



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Israeli, Japanese premiers call for closer cooperation

JERUSALEM (AP) — The leaders of Israel and Japan have called for greater bilateral economic cooperation during a meeting in Jerusalem.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said at a meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Sunday that "The future belongs to those who innovate. Japan

is a country of innovation, Israel is a country of innovation...together we can do a lot more." It is the first visit to Israel by a Japanese premier since 2006.

"Japan and Israel are both countries that don't have much of the natural resources but what we have is human resources," Abe said, adding that ties are growing "in every field." Abe is on a six-day visit to the Middle East with a del-



Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, left, speaks with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during a conference in Jerusalem, Sunday, Jan. 18, 2015. Abe is on his six-day visit to the Middle East.

Associated Press

UK Home Secretary urges fresh action to combat anti-Semitism

LONDON (AP) — Britain's Home Secretary Theresa May has urged fresh action to combat anti-Semitism amid fears in the Jewish community following the terror attacks in Paris. May said Sunday the hostage siege on the Jewish supermarket was a chilling reminder of anti-Semitic prejudice. Speaking at a commemoration for attack victims, May said that she "never thought I would see the day when members of the

Jewish community in the United Kingdom would say they were fearful of remaining here in the United Kingdom." May says efforts to combat anti-Semitism must be redoubled because Jews are integral to Britain. "Without its Jews, Britain would not be Britain, just as without its Muslims, Britain would not be Britain — without its Sikhs, Hindus, Christians and people of other faiths, Britain would not be Britain."

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Israeli strikes kill Hezbollah fighters in Syria



In this picture taken on Feb., 22, 2008, Jihad Mughniyeh, the son of slain top Hezbollah commander Imad Mughniyeh, speaks during a rally to commemorate his father and two other leaders Abbas Musawi and Ragheb Harb, in the Shiite suburb of Beirut, Lebanon.

Associated Press

DIAA HADID
ZEINA KARAM
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — An Israeli strike in Syria on Sunday killed the son of a slain top Hezbollah commander

and another four fighters in a move that could ratchet up tensions with the powerful Lebanese Shiite movement, which recently boasted of rockets that can hit any part of the

Jewish state.

Hezbollah fighters in towns and villages along the border with Israel went on high alert, said an official from the group. In the Shiite-dominated areas of south Lebanon and Beirut the streets emptied quickly, as residents feared an escalation. Hezbollah-run al-Manar TV warned that Israel was "playing with fire that puts the security of the whole Middle East on edge."

A Hezbollah official identified one of the five slain men as Jihad Mughniyeh, the son of Imad Mughniyeh, a top Hezbollah operative assassinated in 2008 in Damascus. Hezbollah blames Israel for the killing and has long vowed to avenge his death. The official said the dead included another senior Hezbollah commander, Mohammed Issa, and at least one Iranian national with the group.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to brief the media.

Israel's military did not comment on Sunday's incident.

Jihad Mughniyeh is one of the most prominent Hezbollah officials to die in Syria since the group entered the fray in 2012, fighting alongside President Bashar Assad's forces against the Sunni-led rebellion.

Sunday's strike targeted two Hezbollah vehicles as fighters were inspecting positions in the Golan Heights, close to the Israeli-controlled frontier, in an area known as Mazrat al-Amal.

Hezbollah's media wing said "a number" of fighters were killed, but did not provide names.

"While a group of Hezbollah fighters were on a field

inspection of the town, Mazrat al-Amal... They faced rocket shelling from helicopters of the Israeli enemy, leading to the martyrdom of a number of holy warrior brothers, whose names will be announced once their honorable families have been informed," it said.

The Hezbollah fighters were in two vehicles when they were hit, said another official who requested anonymity because he wasn't authorized to speak to media.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which relies on activists inside Syria, also said Israeli airstrikes targeted two vehicles in the area.

Syria's state-run media said six people were killed, and that a child was seriously wounded. Conflicting death tolls are common after violent incidents in Syria.

A Syrian activist said Hezbollah was widely rumored to be training pro-Assad militiamen and Syrian government forces near the area of the strikes. The activist, who uses the name Abu Omar, said the tiny community was close to rebel positions, and that they had obtained the information from people there.

Israel and Hezbollah fought a devastating war in 2006, but since then have largely shied away from direct confrontation. But on Thursday Hezbollah's leader Hassan Nasrallah boasted that the group's rockets could hit any part of Israel and threatened to invade the Galilee region of northern Israel in the next war between the two bitter foes.

But Lebanese political analyst Imad Salamey said Hezbollah's hands could be

tied because it is so heavily invested in Syria. "It's an awkward situation," he said.

He said Hezbollah was unlikely to open up a second front in Lebanon while so many of its fighters are bogged down in Syria, and that it would probably not retaliate from Syria because it "invites increasing involvement by Israel to attack its operation inside Syria."

"It does not have much to work with," Salamey said.

Since Syria's conflict began in March 2011, Israel has carried out several airstrikes in Syria that have targeted sophisticated weapons systems, including Russian-made anti-aircraft missiles and Iranian-made missiles, believed to be destined for Hezbollah. The last such airstrike was in early December, when Israeli warplanes struck near Damascus' international airport, as well as outside a town close to the Syria-Lebanon border.

Jihad Mughniyeh was estimated to be around 25, said a friend who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the subject's sensitivity. The friend said Mughniyeh was one of the Hezbollah fighters tasked with overseeing operations in the Golan Heights.

Officials close to Hezbollah said he was active in the group from a young age. He was a Hezbollah student activist at the Lebanese American University, and took on a more prominent role after the death of his father. His photograph has been taken with the group's leader Nasrallah, highlighting their closeness. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly. □

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Irish Cabinet minister announces he's gay

SHAWN POGATCHNIK

Associated Press

DUBLIN (AP) — A senior Cabinet minister in Ireland says he's gay, becoming the first openly homosexual government figure in the history of the traditionally conservative Catholic country.

Sunday's announcement on state radio by Health Minister Leo Varadkar received widespread praise for its straightforward honesty. Analysts said his decision was likely to be viewed with hindsight as a landmark of social change in a country that, until 1993, outlawed homosexual acts. Varadkar said he decided to declare his sexuality in advance of government moves this year to advance gay rights. These include plans to legalize gay marriage, permit homosexual men to donate



In this Dec. 27, 2013 file photo, shows health minister Leo Varadkar in Dublin, Ireland. Associated Press

blood, and create greater parenthood rights for gays in surrogate-pregnancy cases. He said May's constitutional referendum on gay marriage, in particular, got him thinking about going public.

"I was thinking about the arguments that I might make. That's what politicians do. You rehearse

your arguments, you write them down, you run them by a few people. All the arguments that I was going to make were kind of detached ... and that wouldn't have been entirely honest," he told RTE.

"Because what I really want to say is that I'd like the referendum to pass because I'd like to be an equal citizen in my own country — the country in which I happen to be a member of

government — and at the moment I'm not," he said.

Varadkar, who made his announcement on his 36th birthday, is highly regarded in Irish political circles as one of the government's hardest working members and a potential future prime minister. Speculation about his sexuality had grown in recent months, reflecting Varadkar's decision to tell an increasing circle of his family, friends

and political colleagues in private.

Varadkar said he told his parents in advance of his plans to come out publicly, in part because he didn't want them to get the news from fellow parishioners at Catholic Mass.

He said he also telephoned Prime Minister Enda Kenny on Saturday to tell him he was gay and planned to tell the nation the following day. □

German opposition leader faces cannabis plant investigation

BERLIN (AP) — A German opposition party says one of its leaders' immunity from prosecution has been lifted amid an investigation by prosecutors after he was filmed with a cannabis plant on his balcony. The Greens said Sunday that co-chairman Cem Ozdemir's parliamentary immunity from prosecution was lifted last month. The Bild am Sonntag newspaper reported that Berlin prosecutors opened an investigation into suspected growing of drugs after an Ice Bucket Challenge video last summer showed Ozdemir dousing himself in cold water with a cannabis plant in the background.



Green Party co-chairman Cem Ozdemir gives a statement in Berlin, Sunday Jan. 18, 2015.

Associated Press

Prosecutors couldn't immediately be reached for comment Sunday.

Ozdemir said prosecutors had been in touch with him. He advocates legalizing cannabis and said it's "high time" to follow the example of some U.S. states and put the issue on the German Parliament's agenda. □



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Venezuelan textbooks teach math, science, socialism

HANNAH DREIER

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— Students here study math by calculating the benefits of government land take-overs. They practice English by reciting where late President Hugo Chavez was born and learn civics by explaining why the elderly should give him thanks. Pro-administration messages scattered through the pages of Venezuela's textbooks have become yet another point of conflict in this hyper-polarized country, where Chavez's socialist party won a bare majority in the presidential elections of 2013.

Parents recently tossed books into the streets in front of some schools and burned them, acts the loyalist media compared to censorship by the Nazis in 1930s Germany. As children head back to school after winter break, many Venezuelans remain outraged over texts that treat the founder of a deeply divisive socialist revolution with the



In this Dec. 11, 2014 photo, a public school teacher shows a textbook page with the biography of Venezuela's former President Hugo Chavez at the school's library in Caracas, Venezuela.
Associated Press

sort of reverence U.S. textbooks reserve for George Washington. Math lessons include calculations of how much production has increased as a result of the government's agrarian reform initiative, and how much land the government still has to reclaim from private own-

ers. Students are asked to figure out how much shoppers save at government-subsidized appliance stores created by Chavez. Learning English? Answer the question, "Where was Hugo Chavez born?"

"They are brainwashing our kids, erasing our nation's history, and replacing it with their own version," said information technology worker Hector Cuevas, who was appalled when his son brought home the books as a sixth-grader. For defenders, the "Bolivarian" textbooks introduced in 2011 include history traditionally left out of grade school education, and tie lessons to real-life examples in socialist Venezuela. Minister of Education Hector Rodriguez defended the books this fall, and also urged critics to work with the government to improve the collection. "Certainly they can be improved, like any human endeavor," he said, ac-

cording to Venezuelan news website Noticias24. "Those who want to criticize should read the books, and when they find an error they should let us know to correct it." But for opponents, the problem is not errors so much as what they see as attacks on government foes and propaganda for controversial programs. An early edition of the government's social studies book shows a photo of an elderly person writing, "Thanks, Chavez" and instructs students to explain why.

One book interrupts an explanation of fractions to praise a food program "developed by the Bolivarian government to ensure that the poor can eat." While all students receive the books, they are in widest use in poor areas, where they are often the only option for teachers. At Consuelo Navas Tovar high school at the fringes of

one of Caracas' sprawling slums, students in navy blue uniforms study their English textbooks at grimy desks crammed into a bare-walled classroom.

The book has students discuss a study hall sponsored by a government agency known by an arcane acronym.

"It's a project of FUNDABIT!" one student is told to say. "That is excellent!" the partner replies.

Geometry professor Tomas Guardia of Central University of Venezuela has spent months documenting what he and his colleagues call basic errors in math books. One defines a square as a shape with four sides, when that could be a rectangle or a rhombus.

"I'm not a historian, but if the math textbook is so problematic, there's a good chance this book is also full of errors and propaganda" he said, gesturing to a photo of Chavez embracing a child in social studies book captioned, "The future of the land of Bolivar is her children." Cuevas, meanwhile, often pulls out his father's old math textbook to use as a reference for his son. He fantasizes about a collection of textbooks that would reflect his less-sunny vision of modern Venezuela.

"They always use examples like, 'If your mother goes to a government-subsidized supermarket and buys two pounds of sugar and three pounds of meat, how many pounds does she have?'" he said. "Why don't they use an example like, 'If you mother spends two hours in lines waiting to buy sugar, and later waits three hours to buy meat, how many hours has she waited?'"

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Real Island Life: Notes From A Day On Aruba!

PALM BEACH - First of all, I like to welcome you to my island in the sun. Aruba's weather is always so predictable (hot and windy) and that might be the main reason you decided to come visit us. Of course besides the sun there is much more like: beaches, restaurants, shopping, gambling, activities and more. Talking about all those fun things to do here, if you live on the island full time, and work every day, you might forget that we truly live in a paradise. Of course on your off day you might go swimming or drive around but it is after a few more days at home when you start realizing how beautiful our island really is. So I took some time to "smell the ocean breeze"..... I truly think that all locals should do so, once in a while, to appreciate where we live and what we have. ☐ Enjoy breakfast outside in your patio or yard. Breathe in and out.... Let it sink in a little. No rush and no hurry. Take time to enjoy your fresh squeezed lemon juice from your backyard trees with a fish omelet (left over's from last night's in-

credible catch of the day). Grab an ice cooler, fill it up with anything you like to drink cold, and start driving. Of course you can get in an air-conditioned car, but also nice for the experience are the open-air jeeps. In that case all you need is to protect yourself with sun block because our sun is really strong-I recommend Aruba Aloe brand! Packed with a towel and the ice cooler I started driving along the coast line. Never realized how many different shades of blue really exist in the ocean. I counted at least 9 different types of blues-just like you see in famous movies like the "blue lagoon". First stop was the famous Charlie's Bar in San Nicolaas Main Street. Generation after generation of Charlie's have been running this cozy place, where you can spend hours looking around and identifying all the things visiting tourists have left behind to personalize the bar, like baseball caps, business cards, license plates and of course weird kind of souvenirs. Go check it out yourself..... Up to Baby Beach and Rogers beach. These are



the places locals go. This is where we teach our kids to swim. Calm and shallow waters, lots of space to lie out and catch some sun. If you pick a spot close to the Snack Container where they sell burger and refreshments you can enjoy 24-7 "golden oldies". Music you grew up with..... After a few hours of "vegging" on the beach staring at the turquoise ocean and listening to the birds that fly by and walk around it is time to get some food. Zeerovers in Savaneta is the place to go. Simple, clean and oh so good! The freshest fish on the island,

brought in directly by our local fisherman. You order by the piece and or pound and as little or as much as you want. The price for fish and chips is so good that you for sure would ask: "is that all"? No fancy dinner ware, just plain easy simple plastic but I promise you that you will be licking your fingers while enjoying a few drinks and the best sunset on the island, island style..... You see now that a day in Aruba can fly by as long as you have fun enjoy every moment of it. Yes, you are in PARADISE!!! ☐



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Bugaloe is known for fun and craziness, so it was only logical Chef Marc Hernandez likes to go wild when it comes to his

cooking. Caught in the morning, served at night is the true Bugaloe way, maybe this explains its popularity from the start. Crazy Fish Monday is served from 5.30 p.m. till 10 p.m. Bugaloe Beach Bar & Grill is open daily from 9 a.m. till midnight. Start your day of right with a delicious cappuccino, or walk in to enjoy a casual lunch in between sunbathing. A few nights a week Bugaloe is host to some of the best live bands of Aruba, while you are savoring dinner and enjoying the beautiful Aruba Sunset! Don't forget to make one hour in the day even happier at Bugaloe's daily Happy Hour from 5 till 6 p.m. Reservations are not necessary, just follow your hips to the music and the fun and smiles saluting you!

George and Sue menkes honored at the Divi Phoenix



Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very nice couple as Distinguished Ambassadors of Goodwill at the Aruba Divi Phoenix. The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 20 or more consecutive years. The honorees were Mr. George and Sue Menkes from New York. The Menkes family are loyal members of the Aruba Divi Phoenix and they love Aruba very much because of the friendly people, the climate, beaches, restaurants, the stunning view of their room and Aruba feels like a second home, the people are like a family to them and the Divi Phoenix is their home away from home. This year the whole family is back on the island, George and

Sue brought the children and the grandchildren with them on this trip. The Menkes family loves Aruba so much they have their car number plate from NY with ARUBAHHH written on it. The certificates were presented by Mr. Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Mr. Carlos Werleman and GM Mr. Gerrit Griffith representing the Divi Phoenix. □



Sue brought the children and the grandchildren with them on this trip. The Menkes family loves Aruba so much they have their

car number plate from NY with ARUBAHHH written on it. The certificates were presented by Mr. Ernest Giel representing the

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Aruba Marriott appoints new Complex Director of Finance Raymond Habibe rejoins the Aruba Marriott with over 20 years of experience in finance

PALM BEACH, ARUBA – January 2015 – Aruba Marriott is proud to announce the appointment of Raymond Habibe as its new Complex Director of Finance.

In 1995 Raymond started his career as Assistant Controller at the Aruba Marriott and was the first Operations Controller at the Marriott Aruba Ocean Club. Having previously worked as Director of Finance at Curacao Marriott and other renowned hotels on the island, Raymond returns to the Aruba Marriott with over twenty years of experience in the finance discipline.

"We are very excited to have Raymond on board

as part of the Aruba Marriott family and are confident that he will bring great energy, focus, local knowledge and enthusiasm into his role," said Tom Calame, Complex General Manager of the Aruba Marriott.

As Complex Director of Finance, Raymond will be responsible for leading the hotel accounting and finance activities, as well as contributing to the overall success of the three properties by effectively managing all financial objectives.

The Aruba Marriott welcomes Raymond and wishes him the best of luck as he takes on his new responsibilities.





Seattle Seahawks' Russell Wilson cries after overtime of the NFL football NFC Championship game against the Green Bay Packers Sunday, Jan. 18, 2015, in Seattle. The Seahawks won 28-22 to advance to Super Bowl XLIX.

Associated Press

Seahawks rally stuns Packers in OT for NFC title

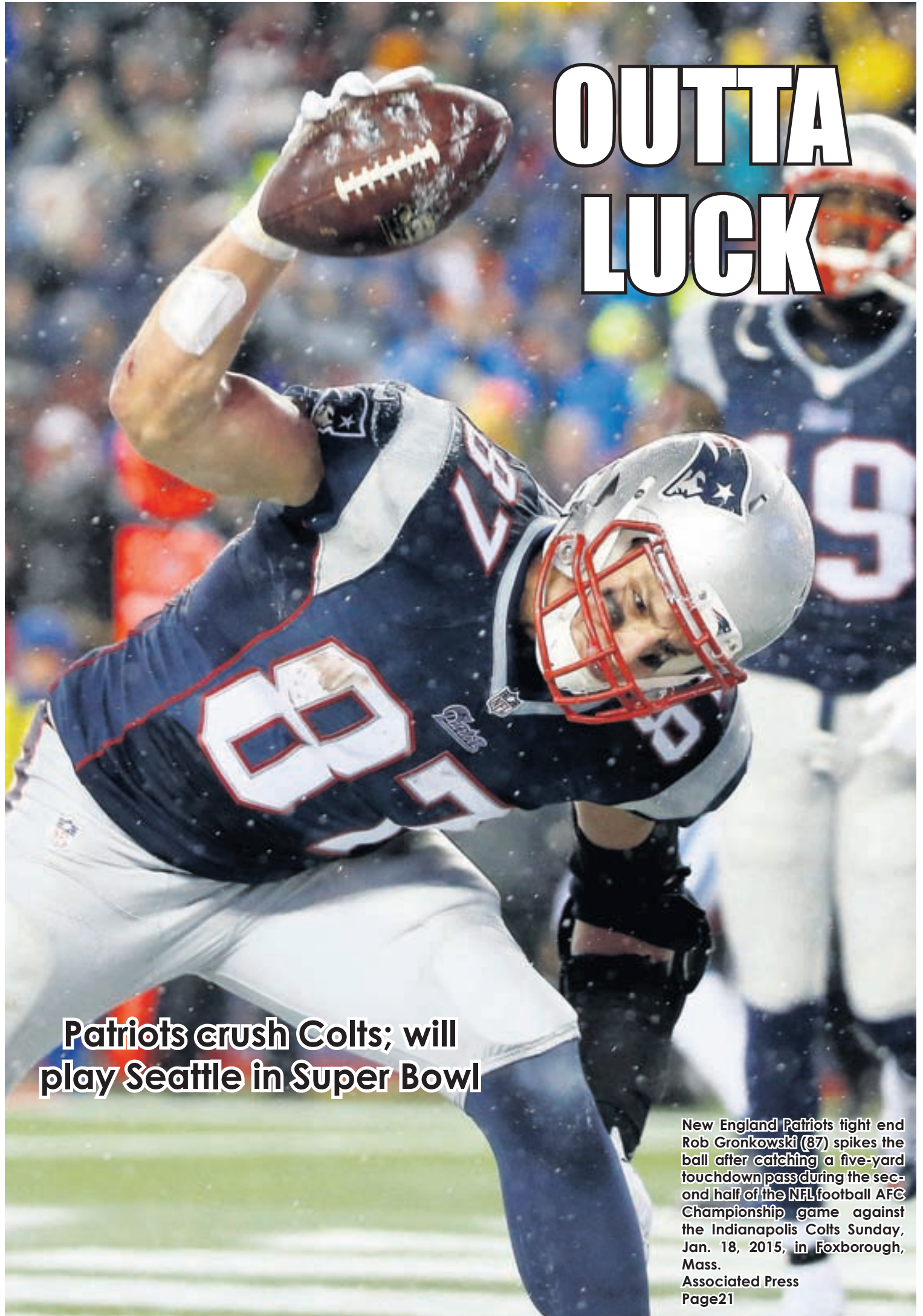
By BARRY WILNER

(SEATTLE (AP)) — The loudest stadium in America was silent. A return trip to the Super Bowl was slipping away. Time for the Seattle Seahawks to show why they are champions.

"You have the belief these guys have in one another, there is nothing you can't do," coach Pete Carroll said after an implausible comeback for a 28-22 victory over Green Bay in the NFC championship game Sunday. Plagued by turnovers and outplayed much of the day, the Seahawks staged a stunning rally built on resilience. Russell Wilson, who struggled until the final minutes, hit Jermaine Kearse for a 35-yard touchdown 3:19 into the extra period to win it.

The Seahawks became the first defending champion to make the Super Bowl in 10 years, and will play the winner of the AFC title game between Indianapolis and New England. How they got there was stunning.

Continued on page 20



OUTTA LUCK

Patriots crush Colts; will play Seattle in Super Bowl

New England Patriots tight end Rob Gronkowski (87) spikes the ball after catching a five-yard touchdown pass during the second half of the NFL football AFC Championship game against the Indianapolis Colts Sunday, Jan. 18, 2015, in Foxborough, Mass.

Associated Press
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‘Uncharted territory’: Vonn matches all-time wins record

ANDREW DAMPF

AP Sports Writer

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy

(AP) — Lindsey Vonn never thought she would make it this far.

Perhaps that's why, after matching the World Cup's all-time record for wins Sunday, she rated it "right below" her Olympic gold medal on her lengthy list of career achievements.

"It's hard to really compare the two," Vonn said. "It's one race over the span of my career. (Olympic gold) means a lot to me because it was a childhood dream. I never thought that I would make it this far as far as World Cup wins. This is kind of uncharted territory for me."

Vonn skied through thick fog and soft snow to win a demanding downhill and tie Annemarie Moser-Proell's 35-year-old record of 62 World Cup victories, capping a comeback from two knee surgeries that kept her out of last year's Sochi Olympics.

"Lindsey made history today," said Patrick Riml, an Austrian who is the U.S. Alpine director and who has

worked with Vonn since she was a junior racer. "She's the greatest skier in the world and she will be for a long time."

Vonn was on track to smash

two months before the games and had to have surgery again.

"The last two years have been pretty tough and a lot of people counted me

Vonn clocked a time of 1 minute, 39.61 seconds down the Olympia delle Tofane course to finish 0.32 ahead of Elisabeth Goergl of Austria. Daniela Merighetti of

to me," Vonn said. "Now I feel like from here on out I'm already tied for No. 1."

Moser-Proell, an Austrian great, established the record between 1970 and 1980.

Swedish standout Ingemar Stenmark holds the men's record of 86 wins.

"I feel like everyone has been talking about (the record) so much and it's a little bit frustrating because I just want to focus on the skiing," Vonn said. "I'm happy that the story is hopefully behind me now so I can just move forward and continue to do my best and hopefully get a lot more wins."

Vonn's third win of the season — all in downhill — and the eighth of her career in Cortina was anything but straightforward.

As clouds moved over the middle of the course, the race was momentarily suspended after 12 skiers came down. And even when Vonn and the other favorites went, visibility varied over each section of the piste.

Vonn came down with the No. 20 bib and had a nervous wait when Goergl came down with No. 22 and was faster at the first two checkpoints. But Goergl couldn't keep up with Vonn on the final turns.

"I maintained my speed on the bottom and that's where I won the race," Vonn said. Goergl, who swept gold in downhill and super-G at the 2011 world championships, wasn't interested in discussing Vonn's record.

"For me it's more about the racing and the competition," the Austrian said. "The statistics and all that stuff, I don't really care."

While Vonn sprayed plenty of champagne on the podium — after struggling to open the bottle for a while — she wasn't planning a big party yet. □



Lindsey Vonn smiles on the podium after winning an alpine ski, women's World Cup downhill, in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy, Sunday, Jan. 18, 2015.
Associated Press

the record two years ago before she crashed at the world championships and tore up her right knee, requiring serious surgery. She attempted to return for Sochi but re-injured her knee

out and thought I would never reach this record," Vonn said. "A lot of people thought that I would never win again. I never stopped believing in myself and I think I proved everyone wrong."

Italy was third, 0.54 back. At the finish, Vonn collapsed to the snow in a scene of relief, then used her ski poles to pick herself back up, flashed a big smile and received a hug from overall World Cup leader Tina Maze, who finished fifth.

"I wasn't quite sure whether I would be fast because the snow was soft," Vonn said. "But I came to the finish and was just so happy. It's been a long road the last two years with both of my knee injuries. It's been pretty tough. But I'm back and I'm winning and 62 feels pretty damn awesome."

Family and members of Vonn's coaching staff put on celebratory T-shirts that said, "Congratulations to our golden Lindsey! Awesome!"

Vonn can break Moser-Proell's record in a super-G scheduled for Monday.

"I think 62 is more important

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Jimmy Walker wins Sony Open by record 9 strokes

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

HONOLULU (AP) — Six days after losing a tournament on Maui he felt he should have won, Jimmy Walker turned in a command performance Sunday on Oahu. He blew away the field with a 7-under 63 to win the Sony Open for the second straight year.

His fourth career victory was the most impressive of all. On a course that lends itself to a free-for-all, Walker shot 62-63 on the weekend and never gave anyone much of a chance, winning by a tournament-record nine shots. The previous record was seven shots, last set in 2000 by Paul Azinger.

Walker became the first repeat winner at the Sony Open since Ernie Els in 2004. Scott Piercy closed with a 66 to finish alone in second. Matt Kuchar, who started the final round two shots out of the lead, didn't make a birdie and shot 71 to tie for third with Harris English and

Gary Woodland, who each had a 67. Kuchar ended his streak of 255 rounds on the PGA Tour with at least one birdie.

But this was Walker's show, and it couldn't have happened at a better time. Walker had a three-shot lead with five holes to play at Kapalua last Monday when he wound up losing to Patrick Reed in a playoff at the Tournament of Champions. With a quick turnaround, he quickly put it behind him.

"I really wanted to finish out the day like I didn't do last week," Walker said.

He finished at 23-under 257. The text message Sunday morning from swing coach Butch Harmon was the same thing caddie Andy Sanders said over every putt: "Don't let up."

The decisive moment came at the par-4 eighth hole. Walker and Kuchar both opened with seven straight pars, and Walker stuffed his approach to 3 feet for

birdie. Kuchar pulled his tee shot into the royal palms, punched out short of the green and made bogey.

That two-shot swing gave Walker a four-shot lead, and he was on his way.

Walker made all seven of his birdies over the final 11 holes, and he couldn't miss on the back nine. He took a total of 20 putts on the back nine at Waialae in the third and fourth rounds. And even with a big lead, he kept grinding away over putts he didn't need to make. It was the largest margin of victory on the PGA Tour since Brian Gay won at Hilton Head by 10 shots in 2009. This was more reminiscent of the last time someone lost in a playoff, and then won the next week. That was Kyle Stanley in 2012, though the circumstances were entirely different.

Stanley made triple bogey on the last hole at Torrey Pines and then lost in a playoff. He won Phoenix

the following week with a great rally. Walker didn't do that

much wrong at Kapalua except for one bad swing off the tee and failing to make a few putts. Still, the loss stung, and he was more than happy to head home to Texas for a two-week break with another trophy.

"He's one of the hottest players in the world," Piercy said after his round, when Walker was pulling away.

"What he's done the last year or two years, nobody's catching him. It's just a cake walk."

Walker didn't treat it like one, which might be why

he won by such a healthy margin.

It was his fourth win in his last 32 starts, and he should move up to No. 13 in the world ranking. During his two-week stay in Hawaii, Walker averaged 66 each round and picked up just under \$1.7 million. Most importantly, he's going home with another trophy.



Jimmy Walker celebrates with the trophy after winning the Sony Open golf tournament, Sunday, Jan. 18, 2015, in Honolulu.

Associated Press

NFC

Continued from page 17

"The will and the drive of these men is unbelievable," Wilson said. "We always find a way to finish." Seattle (14-4) trailed 19-7 with about four minutes remaining and had been ineffective on offense all game. Wilson finally put a drive together with passes to Doug Baldwin and Marshawn Lynch — initially ruled a touchdown but called back because he stepped out of bounds. Wilson finished with a 1-yard scoring run to cut the lead to 19-14 with 2:09 left.

The onside kick went high to Packers tight end Brandon Bostick, but he couldn't gather it, and Seattle's Chris Matthews recovered at the 50. The crowd, quiet since Seattle fell behind 16-0, came alive, and Lynch sped and powered his way to a 24-yard TD run. On the 2-point conversion, Wilson — about to be sacked —



Seattle Seahawks' Jermaine Kearse celebrates after catching the game-winning touchdown during overtime of the NFL football NFC Championship game against the Green Bay Packers Sunday, Jan. 18, 2015, in Seattle. The Seahawks won 28-22 to advance to Super Bowl XLIX.

Associated Press

threw a desperate pass hauled in by Luke Willson to make it 22-19 with 1:25 remaining.

Aaron Rodgers, limping on an injured calf, calmly led the Packers (13-5) downfield to set up Mason Crosby's fifth field goal, a 48-yarder with 14 seconds to go to force overtime.

Then Wilson and Kearse struck, with Kearse — the target on all four of Wilson's interceptions — beating Tramon Williams on the winning pass. Kearse has also caught the winning score in last year's conference title win over San Francisco. "Just making the plays at the end and keep believ-

ing," said Wilson, who was overwhelmed and sobbing after the game. "There was no doubt ... we had no doubt as a team."

Kearse, who has caught touchdown passes in four straight postseason games, and several other Seahawks leaped into the stands behind the end zone, saluting the stadium-record crowd of 68,538. Wilson ran through camera-men to jump on Kearse's back, and defensive end Michael Bennett borrowed a bicycle from a police officer and rode around the edge of the field saluting the "12s."

Until the final minutes, there seemed to be no doubt the Packers were headed to the big game Feb. 1 in Glendale, Arizona. Despite All-Pro Rodgers' injury, Green Bay and its overlooked defense was carrying the day.

"It's going to be a missed opportunity that I'll probably think about for the

rest of my career," Rodgers said. "We were the better team today, we played well enough to win. We can't blame anybody but ourselves."

Special teams trickery lifted the Seahawks back into the game after falling behind 16-0. Their first touchdown came on a fake field goal when holder Jon Ryan threw 19 yards to tackle eligible Garry Gilliam in the third quarter. And Matthews' onside kick recovery kept the Seahawks alive.

Lynch rushed for 157 yards on 25 carries and was the one consistent offensive force Seattle had. He was crucial to both late scoring drives in regulation.

And after the Packers tied it, Seattle wouldn't be denied in overtime, winning the coin toss and going 87 yards in six plays.

The 16-point comeback was the largest ever in a conference title game. The Colts defeated the Patriots after trailing 21-6 in 2006.

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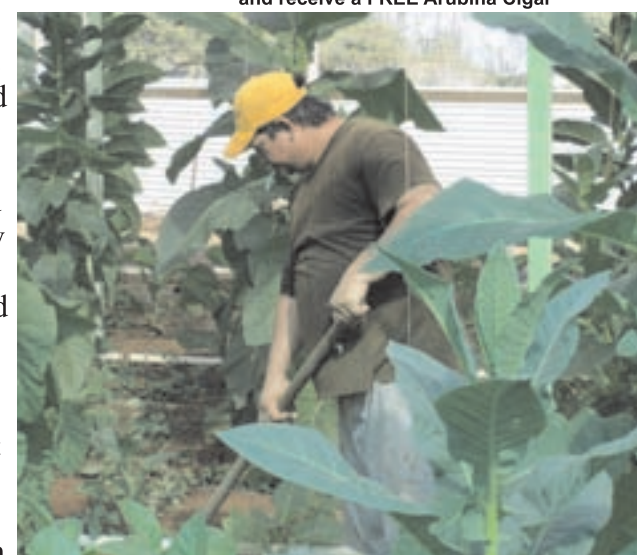
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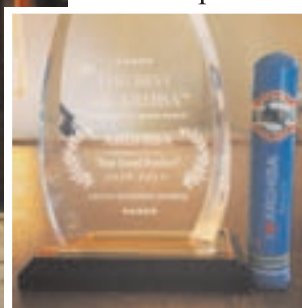
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Belichick, Brady to 6th Super Bowl with 45-7 rout of Colts



New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady cheers as he comes on the field for warm up's before the NFL football AFC Championship game between the Patriots and Indianapolis Colts Sunday, Jan. 18, 2015, in Foxborough, Mass.

Associated Press

By HOWARD ULMAN

AP Sports Writer

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP)

-- Bill Belichick and Tom Brady are headed to a special place where no coach or player has gone more - the Super Bowl. They earned their trip with the second most lopsided AFC championship victory ever.

The New England Patriots dominant duo earned a sixth trip to the Super Bowl with a 45-7 wipeout of the Indianapolis Colts in the AFC championship game before a raucous, rain-soaked crowd Sunday night.

The Patriots tied Dallas and Pittsburgh for most appearances in the big game with eight.

Scoring touchdowns on their first four second-half possessions, the Patriots (14-4) moved on to face defending champion Seattle (14-4) for the NFL title on Feb. 1 in Glendale, Arizona. Belichick will face Pete Carroll, whom he replaced as Patriots coach 2000. The Seahawks beat the Green Bay Packers 28-22 in overtime in the NFC title game. In his first year as a starter, Brady led the Patriots to a Super Bowl win in the 2001

season, starting a run of three championships in four years. Now he and Belichick have a chance for their first in 10 years.

Brady threw three touchdown passes, LeGarrette Blount ran 30 times for 148 yards and three scores and the Patriots charged away after leading just 17-7 at halftime.

With his sixth Super Bowl berth, Brady surpassed John Elway for the most by a quarterback and tied defensive lineman Mike Lodish for most by any player. Belichick's sixth visit tied him with Don Shula's for most by a coach.

Brady completed 23 of 35 passes for 226 yards before being replaced by Jimmy Garoppolo with 3:20 left. Brady went to the sideline where he was embraced by Belichick. Moments earlier, while sitting on the bench, Brady was shown on the video board with soaked hair. He pumped his fist in the air 12 times then slapped hands with teammates.

The biggest blowout in AFC title history was Buffalo's 51-3 win over the Los Angeles Raiders in the 1990 season.

For Colts quarterback An-

drew Luck, it was the worst game of his three-year career and the fourth rout in his four career games against the Patriots, all by at least three touchdowns. He completed 12 of 33 passes for 126 yards, no touchdowns and two interceptions.

He lost 43-22 in last season's divisional playoff with Blount rushing for 166 yards and four touchdowns. And on Nov. 16, he lost 43-22 as Jonas Gray rushed for 201 yards and four touchdowns.

The Indianapolis defense was porous against the run again Sunday night. They weren't much better against the pass.

And when Luck threw an interception that Darrelle Revis late in the third quarter, Blount ran 13 yards for the touchdown that made it 38-7.

One fan held up a sign: "No Luck In Our House" But there was plenty of skill - and a touch of surprise - from the Patriots.

Eight days after baffling Baltimore with a four-man offensive linemen formation that drew a loud protest from Ravens coach John Harbaugh in the Patriots 35-31 divisional win,

Belichick called a pass to left tackle Nate Solder, who was eligible, that resulted in a 16-yard touchdown that made it 24-7 with just under five minutes gone in the third quarter.

The Patriots kept rolling with touchdowns on each of their next three series - a 5-yard pass from Brady to Rob Gronkowski, and Blount's runs of 13 and 2 yards.

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Wilder wins piece of heavyweight title over Stiverne

TIM DAHLBERG

AP Boxing Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Deontay Wilder became the first American to win a piece of the heavyweight title in nearly a decade Saturday night, staggering Bermane Stiverne early on his way to a 12-round unanimous decision that kept him unbeaten in 33 fights.

Going deep into a fight for the first time in his career, Wilder controlled the fight with a big left jab, often followed by right hands up the middle as he piled up points early on his way to the biggest win of his career. The 2008 Olympic bronze medalist, who had never been past the fourth round in winning all 32 of his previous fights, had to go the distance in this one. But the payoff was the WBC heavyweight title and a chance to be a big man on a big stage.

One ringside judge gave Wilder every round, scoring it 120-107, and he won 119-108 and 118-109 on the other two. The Associated Press had Wilder winning 117-111.

"I'm going to bring excitement back to the heavyweight division," Wilder said. "I'm not go-



Deontay Wilder celebrates after defeating Bermane Stiverne in their WBC heavyweight title boxing bout Saturday, Jan. 17, 2015, in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

ing to sit around. Whoever is ready, I'm ready." Wilder had stopped all 32 of his opponents, 18 in the first round and none past the fourth. But his opponents were a suspect lot, and Stiverne (24-2-1) was his first big test as a pro, which he passed with flying colors. Ringside punch stats showed Wilder's dominance, crediting him with landing 227 of 621

punches, including 120 of 420 jabs. Stiverne landed 110 of 327 punches, and only 38 jabs.

It was the first heavyweight title fight at the MGM Grand since Mike Tyson bit off a piece of Evander Holyfield's ear in the infamous Bite Fight 18 years ago. Both Tyson and Holyfield were on hand to watch, as was Larry Holmes, who fought often on the big stage as

heavyweight champion in the 1970s and '80s.

And Wilder became the first American to hold a piece of the heavyweight title since Shannon Briggs in 2006.

"I think I answered a lot of questions tonight," Wilder said. "We knew we could go 12 rounds, we knew we could take a punch."

Wilder took some, but with a huge reach advantage he was able to keep Stiverne on the outside most of the night and made him pay the price when he came inside. Stiverne was never knocked down but was staggered several times. "I wasn't myself. I felt 100 percent but I couldn't cut the ring off like I usually do," Stiverne said. "I was throwing hard punches but I could only throw two of them at a time."

Stiverne was defending the title he won last May when he stopped Chris Arreola in the sixth round. The WBC title had become vacant by the retirement of Vitali Klitschko, whose brother, Wladimir, is considered the true heavyweight champion.

Even in uncharted territory past the fourth round,

Wilder continued to control the fight, moving backward and throwing left jabs to keep Stiverne away. But Stiverne kept coming, and his punches started landing more often as the fight entered the middle rounds.

"Come on, fight!" Stiverne yelled at Wilder after hitting him with a left hook in the sixth round.

The crowd of 8,453 was on its feet in the seventh round as Wilder staggered Stiverne yet again, landing a left jab followed by a straight right up the middle. Stiverne went into the ropes but managed to escape once more.

Both fighters tired toward the end of the bout, drawing some boos from the crowd. But Wilder was still able to use his left jab to pile up points. Adding to the scene was 83-year-old promoter Don King, who also staged the Bite Fight. King, who promotes Stiverne but has largely been inactive in recent years, waved a variety of flags as he climbed into the ring with his fighter, a big cigar clenched between his teeth.

Like Stiverne, though, he left the ring disappointed. □

Baseball Contracts Roundup

Price gets \$19.75M as 95 in MLB arbitration settle

RONALD BLUM

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Detroit Tigers pitcher David Price set a record for the highest one-year contract for a player in salary arbitration, agreeing to a \$19.75 million deal Friday as 95 players reached agreements on the busiest day of baseball's offseason. Several other pitchers got big salaries, including Washington's Doug Fister (\$11.4 million) and Stephen Strasburg (\$7.4 million), Boston's Rick Porcello (\$12.5 million), San Diego's Ian Kennedy

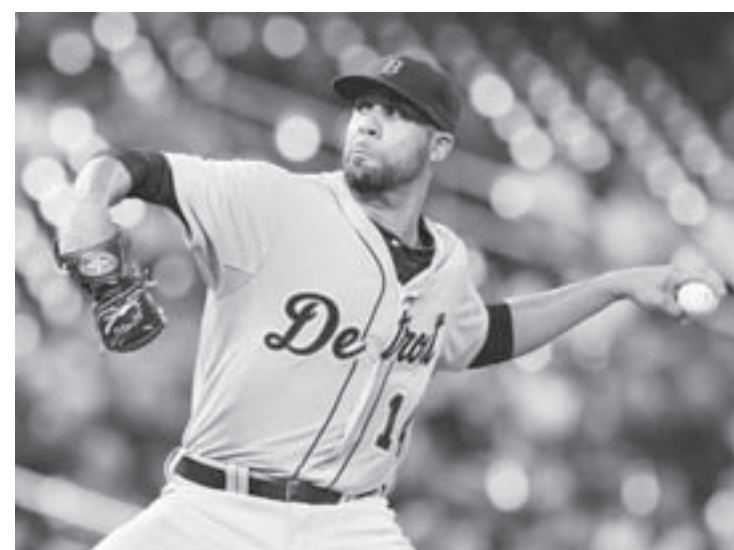
(\$9.85 million), and Jeff Samardzija of the Chicago White Sox (\$9.8 million). Baltimore first baseman Chris Davis, with one game left to serve on a 25-game suspension for using the banned stimulant Adderall, got the largest deal among position players Friday at \$12 million. Orioles catcher Matt Wieters, coming off season-ending elbow surgery in June, agreed at \$8,275,000, and New York Mets second baseman Daniel Murphy at \$8 million.

Of the cases still to be

determined, Houston outfielder Dexter Fowler asked for the most at \$10.8 million, with the Astros offering \$8.5 million. Baltimore outfielder Steve Pearce presented the biggest difference: He asked for \$5.4 million and the team offered \$2 million. Orioles pitcher Bud Norris also had a big gap, requesting \$10.25 million as the team offered \$7.5 million.

Cases that don't settle will be scheduled for hearings next month.

Price's deal topped pitcher Max Scherzer's



In this Sept. 17, 2014, file photo, Detroit Tigers pitcher David Price throws against the Minnesota Twins in the first inning of a baseball game in Minneapolis.

Associated Press

\$15,525,000 agreement with Detroit last year. Scherzer is now a free agent, and Price can go on the open market after this year's World Series, when he will be 30.

Price went 15-12 with a 3.26 ERA last season, when he made \$14 million. He led the major leagues with 271 strikeouts and also set a career high with 248 1-3 innings pitched. □

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Aztec app brings historic Mexico codex into the digital age

MEXICO CITY (AP) — A 16th century document considered one of the most important primary sources on the Aztecs of pre-Columbian Mexico went digital Thursday with a new app that aims to spur research and discussion.

The Codex Mendoza is a 1542 illustrated report ordered by Spanish viceroy Antonio de Mendoza that details sources of riches, Aztec expansion and territorial tributes, and chronicles daily life and social dynamics.

The new interactive codex lets users page through the virtual document, mouse-over the old Spanish text for translations into English

or modern Spanish, click on images for richer explanations and explore maps of the area.

Presented by Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History, the digital codex is available free both on the Internet and through Apple's App Store as a 1.02-gigabyte app.

"Never before had these tools been used to amplify understanding of a document of these characteristics," said Ernesto Miranda, the institute's director of academic innovation.

The original Codex Mendoza was compiled by Aztec and Spanish artisans to inform the king of Spain about conditions in the

viceroyalty. But the boat carrying it to Spain was attacked by French buccanniers and it never reached its destination.

In the mid-17th century it came to be in the collection of University of Oxford, and it has remained there since. Miranda said that until now, Mexican or other researchers who wanted to consult the codex had to track down one of the rare copies, which were only available in English, or make a costly trip to England.

"This is a virtual repatriation" of the document, he said.

"We are in discussions with other European institutions



This image made from the screen of a mobile device on Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015 shows the The Codex Mendoza app with a page from the 16th century document that is considered one of the most important primary sources on the Aztecs of pre-Columbian Mexico.

Associated Press

that hold different Mexican codices," Miranda added. "This should be the first of a series."

The National Institute of An-

thropology and History created the app in collaboration with Oxford's Bodleian Library and King's College London.

Apple, Google, other tech firms to pay \$415M in wage case

MICHAEL LIEDTKE
AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Apple, Google and two other Silicon Valley companies have agreed to pay \$415 million in a second attempt to resolve a class-action lawsuit alleging they formed an illegal cartel to prevent their workers from leaving for better-paying jobs.

The settlement filed Thursday in a San Jose, California, federal court revises a \$324.5 million agreement that U.S. District Judge Lucy Koh rejected as inadequate five months ago. Koh indicated that she believed the roughly 64,000 workers in the case should be paid at least \$380 million, including attorney fees.

The lawsuit, filed in 2011, sought \$3 billion in damages that could have been tripled under U.S. antitrust law. Attorneys for the workers decided to settle after

concluding it would have been difficult to prove the alleged conspiracy to a jury.

If Koh approves the latest settlement, it would avoid a potentially embarrassing trial over claims that Apple Inc., Google Inc., Intel Corp. and Adobe Systems Inc. secretly agreed not to recruit each other's employees from 2005 to 2009. The alleged collusion stopped after the U.S. Justice Department opened an investigation that culminated with an antitrust complaint being filed against Apple, Google and the other participating companies in 2010. The Justice Department's case was settled without the companies admitting any guilt or paying any fines.

The evidence gathered in the ensuing class-action lawsuit has exposed Apple and Google emails that have cast some of their top

executives in an unflattering light.

Apple's late CEO Steve Jobs is depicted as the conniving ringleader of a scheme designed to minimize the chances that the top computer programmers and other talented employees would defect to other technology companies. The lawsuit contends the secret "no-poaching" agreements orchestrated by Jobs suppressed the wages of the employees, many of whom were already making more than \$100,000 annually.

Former Google CEO Eric Schmidt, who was on Apple's board at the time that the alleged collusion began, sometimes took drastic actions to make sure his company didn't cross Jobs. In 2007, Schmidt, in a bid to keep Jobs happy, fired a Google recruiter for contacting an Apple engineer, according to internal

emails.

Both Apple and Google declined to comment on the new settlement. As they did in the Justice Department's investigation, they have denied wrongdoing. Intuit Inc., Pixar Animation Studios and Lucasfilm also participated in the no-poaching ring. Those three companies reached a \$20 million settlement that Koh approved last year.

If Koh approves the deal

filed Thursday, the eligible workers at Apple, Google, Intel and Adobe would receive an average of about \$5,200 apiece. They could have received an average of more than \$100,000 apiece had the case gone to trial and resulted in trebled damages of \$9 billion. The workers' attorneys are seeking fees of up to \$82.3 million in the settlement, the same amount they wanted in the previous agreement.



China's Xiaomi takes aim at Apple with new phone

JOE McDONALD
AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — Rising smartphone star Xiaomi is moving upmarket and taking aim at Apple's iPhone.

The Chinese manufacturer known for ultra-low-priced handsets on Thursday unveiled a new model that Chairman Jun Lei said is comparable to Apple's iPhone 6 but thinner, lighter and much cheaper. The phone starts at 2,299 yuan (\$375), less than half the 5,288 yuan (\$865) price of an iPhone 6 in China.

"We paid attention to every detail to make it as perfect as possible," said Lei, standing on stage before reporters at a convention center in Beijing. Xiaomi, founded in 2010, passed South Korea's Samsung Electronics Co. in the second quarter of last year as the best-selling smartphone brand in China by number of handsets sold. The company is



Lei Jun, chairman of Chinese smartphone maker Xiaomi, takes a selfie on the latest Xiaomi Note smartphone at a press event in Beijing, Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015. Associated Press

expanding into India and other developing markets but has yet to announce plans to enter the United

States or Europe. The new Xiaomi could add to competition for Apple Inc. in China, a market CEO Tim Cook has said is expected to become its biggest. Other Chinese smartphone brands including Lenovo Group and Huawei Technologies Ltd. also have released models they say offer features similar to the iPhone but at lower prices.

Xiaomi "is a respected brand that already has an Apple-like following" in China, said analyst Brian Blair, who tracks mobile device makers at Rosenblatt Securities. Apple is still a relatively small player in China, selling about 45 million iPhones there last year, Blair estimates, but will continue to grow.

"Apple is very much a premium brand," said Blair. "The company that's more at risk is Samsung, which has been losing share in that market."

Wearing jeans and a blue button-down shirt with the sleeves rolled up, Lei showed a side-by-side comparison of Xiaomi's newest model, the Mi Note, and the iPhone 6, which went on sale in China in October. He said the

processor power, performance and memory size were comparable and the Mi Note includes an improved camera.

While less expensive than an iPhone, the Mi Note's price is a departure for Xiaomi, whose other models cost as little as 699 yuan (\$114). Lei said the company will offer a professional version of the Mi Note with a more powerful processor and other features for 3,299 yuan (\$540). Privately held Xiaomi said last year's sales tripled to 61.1 million handsets and revenue more than doubled to 74.3 billion yuan (\$12.2 billion).

The company, based in Beijing, recently completed a round of fundraising from investors that it said valued Xiaomi at \$45 billion, making it one of the world's most valuable technology brands.

Xiaomi ran into legal trouble in India in December after a court blocked sales while it hears a complaint by Sweden's LM Ericsson that the Chinese company violated its patents.

In a blog post earlier this month, Lei called the case a "rite of passage" for a young company. □

Boston taxi drivers sue city over ride-hailing services

BOSTON (AP) — A group of Boston taxi drivers is suing the city, saying officials have violated their rights by allowing online ride-hailing services such as Uber and Lyft to operate without following the same rules taxis do.

The Boston Globe reports that the lawsuit filed in federal court Friday accuses the city of destroying the value of the medallions that taxis must buy to operate, and asks unspecified monetary damages.

A city spokeswoman said officials hadn't received the complaint Friday and will review it. A city advisory commission has been examining the regulations.

The lawsuit also challenges proposed state rules to have the Department of Public Utilities regulate ride-hailing services as "transportation network companies." The legislature hasn't approved the proposal. The lawsuit asks a judge to stop the state from enacting it. □

U.S. manufacturer of Oreo begins building new Bahrain plant

MANAMA, Bahrain (AP) — The U.S. food company behind Oreo cookies and Ritz crackers says it has begun construction of a \$90 million biscuit plant in Bahrain to keep up with growing demand in the Middle East and Africa for Mondelez International's products. The multinational conglomerate behind some of the world's most popular food snacks inaugurated the beginning of construction at the 250,000 square meters (2.7 million square feet) plot for the new plant on Sunday. Mondelez International says the facility will have capacity to produce 90,000 tons per year.

The company said in a statement that its plant in the Arab Gulf island-nation will produce brands such as Oreo, Ritz and TUC in the initial phase, which will create 300 jobs. Full commercial production is scheduled to start early next year. □

Dropouts and Politics and Cats



Gail Collins
© 2015 New York Times News Service

Let's talk about governors. Or college dropouts. Wow, we've only been together for a few seconds and already I sense a strong preference for college dropouts. Lucky I didn't say, "Let's talk about governors. Or cats."

A number of our governors are nursing presidential ambitions. Why not? They have experience running things and dealing with cranky legislators. Also, they look at the herd of presidential hopefuls and think, "Clearly, I could do better." This is true of every elected official down to and including members of the zoning board of appeals, but we tend to take governors more seriously. The most brazen prospective candidate, Chris Christie, prepared for his State of the State speech this week with a special off-the-record news conference to which only national journalists were invited. Honest - he barred the state reporters from his discussion of the state of the state. Maybe the governor was afraid they'd distract him with small-bore questions about New Jersey's eight credit downgrades. Then it was on to the speech, during which Christie talked about America's world leadership ("called into question") and the state of the nation ("beset by anxiety"). And if you don't believe that last part, he had a story about a little old lady he met in Florida.

Meanwhile, Gov. Mike Pence stuck pretty much to Indiana. ... Whoops, I feel you drifting away at the words "Mike Pence." Well, he appears to have presidential ambitions as well. Plus two cats named Pickle and Oreo.

Now that I've regained your attention, let's consider Scott Walker, the governor of Wisconsin. Walker really, really wants to run for president. His State of the State speech was about opposing terrorism and shrinking the government, plus 10 billion mentions of the Green Bay Packers. He's already hired a political consultant for his run. The consultant's claim to fame is having helped oversee the presidential campaign of Rudy Giuliani, but nobody's perfect.

If Walker was elected, he'd be the first president without a college degree since Harry Truman.

Yes! This is the college dropout connection. How important do you think it is for a president to have a college degree? If Walker gets traction I am looking forward to digging into this a lot. Perhaps it will give me a chance to explain why William Henry Harrison quit medical school in 1791. Walker went to Marquette University in Milwaukee. I went to Marquette, too. Had a great time. Unlike Walker, I got a degree. Only one of us is a governor, so there's a point for the dropouts right there.

His early departure may have had something to do with disappointment over an unsuccessful career in campus politics. Or just not being very into school. Apparently, Walker was a mediocre student. By the way, how much do we care about presidential prospects' college grades? Not much - these are middle-aged people, for heaven's sake. Actually, we just need to be sure that if the grades were bad, the candidate has gotten over it.

John Kerry's presidential campaign in 2004 was hobbled by outrageous attacks on his war record, which Kerry might have been able to bury by releasing all his Navy records. He wouldn't, until long after the race was over. Then reporters discovered that everything about his military career was exactly as Kerry had portrayed it. The only news was in his college transcript, which was included in the file and pretty dismal. I've always wondered if the entire course of modern American history would have turned out different if Kerry had not wanted to conceal the fact that his academic performance at Yale was worse than George W. Bush's.

As far as quitting school goes, Walker left during his senior year to take a marketing job with the local chapter of the American Red Cross. This doesn't seem totally unreasonable. He obviously wasn't into school. And in many lines of work, it's only the job history that matters.

However, we want to make sure that when students of the future are making decisions like this, they're grounded in reality. Walker claimed that he was about to get the rest of his credits while he was working, but then he got married. (Actually, as PolitiFact Wisconsin reported in a stupendously thorough investigation of this matter, he had several years of potential night school time before he wed.) Then he was going to go, but he was county executive and too busy. And it keeps going on.

"Maybe in the next few years," he told reporters in 2013.

This is a bad sign. I think I speak for all of us when I say we do not want to hear any arguments that we should elect Walker president so he'll have time to finish his senior year credits.

But at least he didn't hug the Dallas Cowboys' owner.



Francs, Fear and Folly



Paul Krugman
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Ah, Switzerland, famed for cuckoo clocks and sound money. Other nations may experiment with radical economic policies, but with the Swiss you don't get surprises.

Until you do. On Thursday the Swiss National Bank, the equivalent of the Federal Reserve, shocked the financial world with a double whammy, simultaneously abandoning its policy of pegging the Swiss franc to the euro and cutting the interest rate it pays on bank reserves to minus, that's right, minus 0.75 percent. Market turmoil ensued.

And you should feel a shiver of fear, even if you don't have any direct financial stake in the value of the franc. For Switzerland's monetary travails illustrate in miniature just how hard it is to fight the deflationary vortex now dragging down much of the world economy.

What you need to understand is that all the usual rules of economic policy changed when financial crisis struck in 2008; we entered a looking-glass world, and we still haven't emerged. In many cases, economic virtues became vices: Willingness to save became a drag on investment, fiscal probity a route to stagnation. And in the case of the Swiss, having a reputation for safe banks and sound money became a major liability.

Here's how it worked: When

Greece entered its debt crisis at the end of 2009, and other European nations found themselves under severe stress, money seeking a safe haven began pouring into Switzerland. This in turn sent the Swiss franc soaring, with devastating effects on the competitiveness of Swiss manufacturing, and threatened to push Switzerland - which already had very low inflation and very low interest rates - into Japanese-style deflation.

So Swiss monetary officials went all out in an effort to weaken their currency. You might think that making your currency worth less is easy - can't you just print more bills? - but in the post-crisis world it's not easy at all. Just printing money and stuffing it into the banks does nothing; it just sits there. The Swiss tried a more direct approach, selling francs and buying euros on the foreign exchange market, in the process acquiring a huge hoard of euros. But even that wasn't doing the trick.

Then, in 2011, the Swiss National Bank tried a psychological tactic. "The current massive overvaluation of the Swiss franc," it declared, "poses an acute threat to the Swiss economy and carries the risk of a deflationary development."

And it therefore announced that it would set a minimum value for the euro - 1.2 Swiss francs - and that to enforce this minimum it was "prepared to buy foreign currency in unlimited quantities." What the bank clearly hoped was that by drawing this line in the sand it would limit the number of euros it actually had to buy.

And for three years it worked. But Thursday the Swiss suddenly gave up. We don't know exactly why; nobody I know believes the official explanation, that it's a response to a weakening euro. But it seems likely that a fresh wave of safe-haven money was making the effort to keep the franc down

too expensive.

If you ask me, the Swiss just made a big mistake. But frankly - frankly? - the fate of Switzerland isn't the important issue. What's important, instead, is the demonstration of just how hard it is to fight the deflationary forces that are now afflicting much of the world - not just Europe and Japan, but quite possibly China too. And while America has had a pretty good run the past few quarters, it would be foolish to assume that we're immune.

What this says is that you really, really shouldn't let yourself get too close to deflation - you might fall in, and then it's extremely hard to get out. This is one reason that slashing government spending in a depressed economy is such a bad idea: It's not just the immediate cost in lost jobs but also the increased risk of getting caught in a deflationary trap.

It's also a reason to be very cautious about raising interest rates when you have low inflation, even if you don't think deflation is imminent. Right now serious people - the same serious people who decided, wrongly, that 2010 was the year we should pivot from jobs to deficits - seem to be arriving at a consensus that the Fed should start hiking very soon. But why? There's no sign of accelerating inflation in the actual data, and market indicators of expected inflation are plunging, suggesting that investors see deflationary risk even if the Fed doesn't.

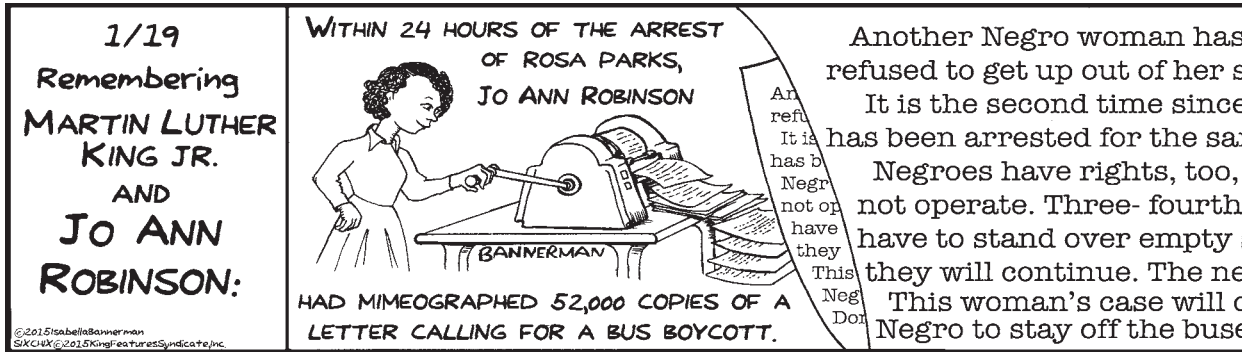
And I share that market concern. If the U.S. recovery weakens, either through contagion from troubles abroad or because our own fundamentals aren't as strong as we think, tightening monetary policy could all too easily prove to be an act of utter folly.

So let's learn from the Swiss. They've been careful; they've maintained sound money for generations. And now they're paying the price.

Mutts



6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

1		8				9		2
	6			8			3	
3			1		9			7
		7		5		2		
	2		3		7		9	
		4		9		8		
5			6		8			9
	9			1			4	
4		2				1		5

Difficulty Level ★

1/19

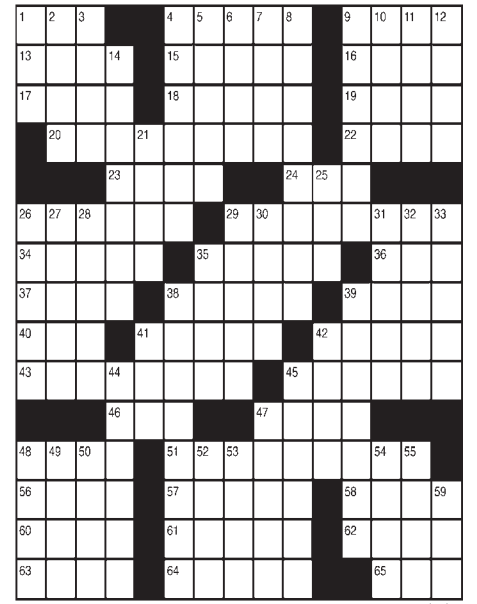
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Saturday's puzzle answer

3	6	2	7	8	5	1	4	9
1	8	9	4	3	6	7	5	2
7	4	5	9	2	1	6	3	8
5	1	4	2	9	7	8	6	3
8	7	3	6	5	4	9	2	1
9	2	6	3	1	8	4	7	5
6	5	1	8	7	2	3	9	4
2	9	7	1	4	3	5	8	6
4	3	8	5	6	9	2	1	7

ACROSS

- Moving truck
- Send in payment
- Peeves
- Reason to avoid a skunk
- Privileged class
- Bedtime on a school night, perhaps
- Surfboard support
- Excessive enthusiasm
- Murdered
- Charisma; allure
- Box of ___; golf shop purchase
- ___ bareback; used no saddle
- Fannie ___; home loan type
- Actress Ally ___
- Greedy
- Sheds feathers
- Engagement
- Female deer
- Weapons
- Pricier hotel reservation
- Roaring beast
- AB followers
- Naive types
- Silly as a ___
- Neck scarf
- Clusters on egrets' heads
- Sweltering
- ___ to rest; buried
- "When I ___ lad..."; start of grandpa's tale
- Like a sponge
- Grows old
- "Good for you!"
- ___ a mouthful; spoke volumes
- Outer garment
- Was fond of
- Neat
- Villain
- ___ board; nail file
- Mr. Iacocca



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

1/19/15

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

DOWN

- Sworn promise
- Eden resident
- ___ Scotia
- Cure
- Make joyous
- Skimpy skirt
- Suffix for an inflammation
- Fellow athlete
- Part of the foot
- Make angry
- Patella's place
- Makes clothes
- Rues
- ___ off; falls asleep
- ___ Wednesday; 2/18/15
- Noisy kiss
- Crowd
- Fudd of cartoons
- Great sorrow
- Decays
- Common expression
- Lasso's loop
- Autry & Tierney

L	A	K	E	S	O	A	K	S	B	R	A	D
O	X	E	N	T	U	L	I	P	R	O	D	E
B	E	L	T	A	R	E	N	A	O	O	Z	E
O	S	P	R	E	Y	S	D	R	E	A	M	E
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D	E	C	A	F	S	U	E	D	E	M	O	N
E	X	I	T	G	I	N	R	E	N	E	G	E
A	U	G	P	A	R	C	H	E	D	A	R	E
L	L	A	M	A	S	H	A	D	F	L	E	D
S	T	R	A	P	G	E	L	S	A	S	S	Y
			S	A	V	E	S	C	A	B		
U	N	B	O	S	O	M	B	E	D	R	E	S
N	O	O	N	W	I	D	E	R	I	C	K	Y
I	T	O	R	E	N	A	C	T	C	H	I	P
V	E	R	Y	L	I	N	K	S	S	O	S	O

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1/19/15

- Toothpaste container
- Appropriate
- Noisiest
- Fraternity letter
- Insincerely smooth
- Unsoiled
- Spoof
- Romantic one
- City in Texas
- Very eager
- Burn slightly
- Teacup's edge
- "For Pete's ___"
- Tack
- Laundry soap
- Hair solution

GO FIGURE: Figuring the odds of Earth's global hot streak

SETH BORENSTEIN
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The global heat streak of the 21st century can be explained with statistics that defy astronomical odds.

First, the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration calculates global average temperature going back to 1880. That's 135 years. So if no other forces were in play and temperatures last year were totally at random, then the odds of 2014 being the warmest on record are 1 in 135. Not too high.

But record and near record heat keep happening. Climate scientists say it's not random but from heat-trapping gas spewed by the burning of coal, oil and gas. You know, global warming. And one of their many pieces of evidence is how statistically unlikely it is for the world to have warmed so much.

So how likely are these temperatures to be random? The Associated Press consulted with statisticians to calculate the odds of this hot streak happening at random.

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24/7

The heat is on

NOAA, NASA say 2014 warmest year on record

SETH BORENSTEIN
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — For the third time in a decade, the globe sizzled to the hottest year on record, federal scientists announced Friday.

Both the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and NASA calculated that in 2014 the world had its hottest year in 135 years of record-keeping. Earlier, the Japanese weather agency and an independent group out of University of California Berkeley also measured 2014 as the hottest on record.

NOAA said 2014 averaged 58.24 degrees Fahrenheit, (14.6 Celsius) 1.24 degrees above the 20th-century average.

But NASA, which calculates temperatures slightly differently, put 2014's average temperature at 58.42 degrees Fahrenheit, (14.7 Celsius) which is 1.22 degrees above the average of the years 1951-1980.

Earth broke NOAA records set in 2010 and 2005. The last time the Earth set an annual NOAA record for cold was in 1911.

NOAA also said last month was the hottest December on record. Six months in 2014 set marks for heat. The last time Earth set a monthly cold record was in December 1916.

"The globe is warmer now than it has been in the last 100 years and more likely in at least 5,000 years," said climate scientist Jennifer Francis of Rutgers University, who wasn't part of either research team. "Any wisps of doubt that human activities are at fault are now gone with the wind." Texas A&M University climate scientist Andrew Dessler and other experts said the latest statistics should end claims by non-scientists that warming has stopped. It didn't, as climate denial sites still touted claims that the world has not warmed in 18 years.

2014's heat was driven



In this July 1, 2014 file photo, Amanda Ouellet wipes her face with a cold wet towel to cool off while working outside holding an advertising sign in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

by record warmth in the world's oceans that didn't just break old marks: It shattered them. Record warmth spread across far eastern Russia, the western part of the United States, interior South America, much of Europe, northern Africa and parts of Australia. One of the few cooler spots was in the central and eastern United States.

"Every continent had some aspect of record high

temperatures" in 2014, said Tom Karl, director of NOAA's National Climatic Data Center.

Nine of the 10 hottest years in NOAA global records have occurred since 2000. The odds of this happening at random are about 650 million to 1, according to University of South Carolina statistician John Grego. Two other statisticians confirmed his calculations.

Climate scientists say one of the most significant parts of 2014's record is that it happened during a year where there was no El Nino weather oscillation.

During an El Nino, when a specific area of the central Pacific warms unusually and influences weather worldwide, global temperatures tend to spike. Previous records, especially in 1998, happened during El Nino years.



GO FIGURE: Figuring the odds of Earth's global hot streak

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warming. And one of their many pieces of evidence is how statistically unlikely it is for the world to have warmed so much.

So how likely are these temperatures to be random? The Associated Press consulted with statisticians to calculate the odds of this hot streak happening at random.

Inarritu's 'Birdman' explores ego and art, on screen and off

SANDY COHEN

AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Director Alejandro Inarritu says the only way to communicate the struggle between a celebrity and his ego in "Birdman" was through long, uninterrupted shots that move at the pace of life.

Those sweeping takes — the subject of much discussion this Oscar season — are intended to mimic the way people see the world, he says: "We open our eyes and go with a Steadicam all day, and we can't escape."

"When we get up, there are no edits," the filmmaker said. "The only time our perspective is edited or cut is when we tell stories — fiction — or experience a memory from our lives. But in reality, our lives are — absolutely, all the time — only linear. They move in only one direction."

Inarritu felt he had to capture that sense of movement and bring viewers inside the characters' perspectives to express such a personal, internal notion as ego. His creative storytelling and aesthetic, where the whole film appears to be one continuous shot with no edits, led to nine Academy Awards nominations Thursday, including best director and best picture — a heady experience for even the most in-check ego.

"Birdman" stars best actor contender Michael Keaton as Riggan Thompson, a once-popular action star trying to prove his artistic merit by mounting a Broadway play. Emma Stone is his insightful, dispassionate daughter; Ed Norton his cocky stage colleague. Both Stone and Norton earned supporting actor nods for their roles.

Emmanuel Lubezki, nominated for his thrilling cinematography, carries viewers through the action: up stairs, down hallways and through windows. He called the photography

"an experiment that thankfully turned out well."

So how'd they do it? Inarritu won't say exactly.

"I would prefer to have the rabbit in the hat," he said, but added the approach inspired the actors and made him "more honest" as a filmmaker.

What we do know is those fluid, single-camera shots required pacing and tone — elements that would typically be manipulated in post-production — to be thoroughly addressed ahead of time. Instead of multiple takes, there were multiple rehearsals.

"I needed a meticulous exploration of every word, every step, every movement, every look of actors to define where that camera will be and where it will come," Inarritu said. "So we got (the cast) together with much more time to explore dramatic objectives and to understand what the characters wanted, needed and how they will get it."

The long rehearsal period allowed the actors to "own" their characters and their words, he said. Once shooting began, it was like "an endless spaghetti that cannot be cut."

The Mexico-born director's past credits include more serious-toned fare such as "21 Grams," "Amores Perros" and the Oscar-nominated "Babel," but he was moved to explore the human condition of ego through a comedic lens.

"I wanted to approach with some humor — not irony, not cynicism — but just literally try to see those tragic facts of life, of our lovely and pathetic reality as human beings," he said. He wanted to explore the fight within the self over ego — Who am I? Who should I be? — as it relates to the classic debate about art: whether prestige or popularity matters more.

Now, with nine Oscar nominations, is Inarritu concerned his ego could sprout wings?

The 51-year-old said he



In this Wed., Dec. 17, 2014 photo, Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu, director of the film "Birdman," poses for a portrait at the Four Seasons Hotel in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

tries to resist allowing industry recognition to make him feel like a winner or loser, but is grateful for the support and hopes it brings more viewers to "Birdman." Just making the film feels like a victory to him.

"The moment you present something and create catharsis in the people, you

have done something that has an effect emotionally, and that's artistic already, no matter if the people consider it good or not," he said. "That is something that is not easy, and I feel proud about that."

Then, Riggan's voice, or maybe Birdman's, creeps in.

"At the same time, the delusional ambition of artists thinking that we have an impact that will change the soul of humanity and transcend time and eternity, it's an intellectual masturbation that I find tragic and comic at the same time," Inarritu said. "It's, you know, Who cares?" □



British comedian and actor Stephen Fry poses for photographs with a BAFTA (British Academy of Film and Television Arts) statuette during a photocall to mark the announcement of the BAFTA award nominations in London, Friday, Jan. 9, 2015.

Associated Press

Actor-comedian Stephen Fry weds partner

LONDON (AP) — Actor-comedian Stephen Fry has married partner Elliott G. Spencer in eastern England.

The 57-year-old Fry sent a tweet to his 8 million followers on Saturday, announcing that he had tied the knot.

"Gosh. @ElliottGSpencer and I go into a room as two people, sign a book and leave as one," Fry says on his Twitter feed. "Amaz-

ing." Well-wishers tweeted their congratulations on Sunday.

Fry announced his plans earlier this month to wed 27-year-old Spencer at the register office in Dereham, eastern England.

One of Britain's best known presenters, Fry first gained fame in the 1980s in a comedy duo with Hugh Laurie. He also written novels and appeared in the film, "The Hobbit." □

Academy president responds to Oscar firestorm

SANDY COHEN

AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Responding for the first time to the firestorm of criticism over the lack of diversity in this year's Oscar nominations, film academy president Cheryl Boone Isaacs says the all-white acting slate inspires her to accelerate the academy's push to be more inclusive. She also hopes the film industry as a whole will continue to strive for greater diversity. The first black president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences spoke out Friday night in an exclusive interview with The Associated Press about the Oscar nominations and the widespread criticism that followed.

All 20 of this year's acting contenders are white and there are no women in the directing or writing categories. After the nominations were announced Thursday morning, the hashtag #OscarsSoWhite started trending on Twitter.

The Asian Pacific American Media Coalition issued a statement Friday saying the nominations balloting "obviously reflects a lack of diversity in Oscar voters as well as in films generally."

Yet Boone Isaacs insisted the academy is "committed to seeking out diversity of voice and opinion" and that outreach to women and artists of color is a major focus.

"In the last two years, we've made greater strides than we ever have in the past toward becoming a more diverse and inclusive organization through admitting new members and more inclusive classes of members," Boone Isaacs said. "And, personally, I would love to see and look forward to see a greater cultural diversity among all our nominees in all of our categories."

A 2012 survey by the Los Angeles Times found the academy was 94 percent white, overwhelmingly male and with a median age of 62. A more recent survey determined the percentage of older white males had dropped by



In this Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015 file photo, Chris Pine, left, and Academy President Cheryl Boone Isaacs announce the Academy Awards nominees for best actor in a leading role at the 87th Academy Awards nomination ceremony in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Associated Press

one point, the Times said. But with nearly 7,000 members and no requirement to retire, diversity is going to take some time.

Boone Isaacs declined to address whether she and the academy were embarrassed by the slate of white Oscar nominees, instead insisting that she's proud of the nominees, all of whom deserved recognition. She explained that while each branch comes up with its own criteria for excellence and each nominates its colleagues, all voting is individual and confidential.

For instance, only directors can suggest best director nominees and only actors can nominate actors. But the entire academy membership can submit suggestions for best picture.

"There is not one central body or group of people that sit around the table and come up with nominations," she said. "It really is a peer-to-peer process."

With all the accolades the civil rights drama "Selma" has received since its Christmas opening, some felt its failure to garner nominations for director Ava DuVernay or star David Oyelowo reflected a racial bias.

"What is important not to lose sight of is that 'Selma,' which is a fantastic motion picture, was nominated for

best picture this year, and the best picture category is voted on by the entire membership of around 7,000 people," Boone Isaacs said.

Besides best picture, the film received just one additional nod — for original song — in what was widely viewed as a significant snub. But fans shouldn't feel that way, she said: "It's nominated for the Oscar for best picture. It's an award that showcases the talent of everyone involved in the production of the movie 'Selma.'"

Boone Isaacs says the five best actor nominees — Bradley Cooper ("Ameri-

can Sniper"), Steve Carell ("Foxcatcher"), Benedict Cumberbatch ("The Imitation Game"), Eddie Redmayne ("The Theory of Everything") and Michael Keaton ("Birdman") — "are all at the top of their game." "There are quite a few actors this year at the top of their game," she said. "There are five nominees and this year, these were the five."

Diversity outreach is spread among the academy's 17 branches, she said, since existing members recruit new ones.

"This is a membership organization, so we are all involved in this discussion

and moving the subject of diversity forward," she said. "It's very important for us to continue to make strides to increase our membership and the recognition of talent."

In its Friday statement, the Asian Pacific coalition said the responsibility for diversity in film should be industry-wide.

"It behooves Hollywood — as an economic imperative, if not a moral one — to begin more closely reflecting the changing face of America," the statement said.

Boone Isaacs agrees, saying that as the academy "continues to make strides toward becoming a more diverse and inclusive organization, we hope the film industry will also make strides toward becoming more diverse and inclusive."

Though she repeatedly stressed the Oscars are a competitive process and that she's proud of the year's nominees, Boone Isaacs acknowledged that diversity needs to be mandatory in both story and storyteller.

"It matters that we pay attention to, again, the diversity of voice and opinion and experience, and that it doesn't slide, it doesn't slide anywhere except for forward," she said. "And maybe this year is more just about let's kick it in even more."

MTV airs in black and white to spark conversation on race

STACY A. ANDERSON

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — MTV is taking the color out of its programming on Martin Luther King Jr. Day to encourage people to talk about what race means in their lives.

The programming move is meant to promote #TheTalk initiative, encouraging viewers to discuss race with their friends and family.

"The device of turning us black and white is going to be really—visually—a jolt to say, you know what,

there are differences and if we are going to ever get to a freer, more equal society the best thing we can begin to do is talk about them," MTV President Stephen Friedman said.

The retro-look programs will air for 12 hours and will include personal reflections on race from entertainers and public officials, including Kendrick Lamar, Big Sean, Jordin Sparks, Pete Wentz, Republican Sen. Rand Paul, Democratic Rep. John Lewis, Democratic Sen. Cory Booker,

"Selma" director Ava DuVernay and actor David Oyelowo, who portrayed King in the film.

The Oscar-nominated film "Selma" chronicles the 1965 marches for voting rights that King led through Alabama. Lewis, one of the student leaders working with King, suffered a skull fracture when Alabama state troopers, sheriff's deputies and county posse members wielding bullwhips, clubs and tear gas advanced on the marchers on the outskirts of Selma.



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